

# The Athenian Mercury.



HAVING lately received a very *Civil Letter*, from an unknown Ingenious Gentleman, it's thought fit to *Print* some part thereof, as well as a *Query* contain'd therein.

Gentlemen,

"I happen'd to read that Sheet of your *Athenian Mercury*, in which you resolv'd a Query concerning some *Actions* of Brutes that resembled *Reason*. Your Discourse there, was so very *acute* and *solid*, that it invited me to peruse divers others, which without Flattery gave me that esteem for you, that I resolv'd to lend my best assistance to render your endeavours beneficial to the World, which I ought to suppose, is the *mark* you aim at. I look on your *undertaking*, as on one of the most laudable Projects our *Age* has invented, and if prudently managed, the most conducing to improve Knowledge in the *Generality* of *Mankind*, according to their several Capacities: Whence out of my Zeal, for the Common good, I make bold to offer you my *Friendly Advice*, that you would not bestow one Minute of your precious Time in answering *Impertinent* and *Piqueish Queries*, no not even those that concern the Interest of any *Party* or *Faction*. The Promoters of Truth shou'd move in a higher *Sphere*, and indeed shou'd write to none but *Cosmopolitans*: The descending from that height, declines you into a lower *Class* of *Writers*, it abates the respect otherwise due to your *Excellent Labours*, it exposes you, as the World goes, to ridicule, it lessens the *Credit* and *Currency* of your Papers, by stirring up the anger of the *Parties* you disgust, and must needs force you upon Banter now and then, to humour the *Palate* of the *Times*. And whereas Truth is *immortal*, and those writings which have only Truth for their *Motive* and *Object*, do partake a Lastingness from her *unchangeable Nature*, the meddling with the Interest of any *State* or *Party* will reduce your Works to the *Transitory Condition* of *Gazetts* and *Almanacks*, and shou'd a *Revolution* happen, would render 'em *obnoxious*, blast their *Credit*, and to make 'em become *useless*.

"One thing more—I think it a very necessary rule to be observ'd by all those, who are task't to give Answers to many cramp Questions, never to puzzle their *Brains* by seeking out a *Reason* for any strange pretended Effect, till they had perfect Assurance the Matter of Fact was *True*: Particularly to such, as that of the *Fetch-Light* in *Car-marthenshire*, Vol. 6. Num. 6. My self have been divers times imposed upon by Relations of *Spirits* haunting Houses, &c. which I fear had as great or greater Authority than

"has that *uncouth* and very *unlikely Story*, nay "some of 'em pretended to have above a hundred *Eye-Witnesses*, which yet upon narrow Examination prov'd but meer *Fopperies*.

"I heartily Congratulate your design, to lay open the Vanity of the *Silly, Witty Atheist*. Mr. *Hobbs*, whose bold unprov'd talk has done much mischief among that pitch of Men, who are meerly given to quaint Conceits, and plausible Drollery, which unhappy Temper inclines 'em to put off their *Humane Nature*, as far as they are able, by subjecting their Reason to their *Fancy*, and 'tis but fitting, that they who desert their *Christianity*, shou'd first renounce the true *Nature* God has given 'em, their Reason.

Thus much we have Printed of this Letter, to let it be known that there are some Ingenious Men, who don't think so ill of us as our Brethren of *Laedemon*, tho' perhaps the Gentleman may be almost as much out of one side as they are o'ther. However we must own our selves extreamly oblig'd to him for his good Thoughts, and Wishes, and Advices. As to the last of those, the Advice he gives to be of no Party, or at least to appear of none in our Papers—we own 'tis safe and prudent, but confess, we can't think it honourable. Not but that we were once in the Mind to have done so, for some of the Reasons he gives us, but our Sentiments as to matters of Policy were unawares extorted from us by the ——— of some men, who wou'd not be quiet, neither with Letters, nor Abuses, till we at length return'd 'em such answers as we thought they deserv'd.

However, *Facta est alea*—We are now in, and we must through as well as our betters, or else justly fall unpitied, and sink for ever. Every one now knows what Party we have engaged in, 'tis so notorious that some of the contrary side have thought it worth the while publicly to oppose us, and 'tis the same that all that's brave in Europe now draw their Swords for; and at the Head of 'em all the bravest Prince in the World. Nay, if it be a weakness, we must acknowledge it, that had we our Liberty and Choice to begin again, we shou'd frankly espouse the same Cause, tho' perhaps with less Reflections on the contrary, which we confess are neither Necessary, nor Prudent in such a way of Writing, for the Reasons the Gentleman gives, and which for the future, we shall, unless extreamly provoked, endeavour to avoid—upon all other Parties as well as that Faction in State, which we ingenuously confess, we can never love: But this not out of any mean Politics, with vain hopes that our little Cock boat shou'd scape if the Royal-Sovereign perish'd, (better we and all our Querists



*Querists* i'th' bottom of the *Sea*) for we neither wish, hope nor desire, to outlive the *Liberties* of *Europe*, and are much of the ingenuous *Dr. Browns* mind, that "he must extremely value *Life*, who wou'd outlive the *Ruines* of the *World* — this we say is not the *Reason*, and to preclude any such expectation, (tho' *God* forbid there shou'd be any occasion for't) have thus plainly declar'd our *Judgments*, and not to flatter such *Princes* as need it not, for we cou'd expect no *Benefit* by it, some few of our *Names* being only guess't at, which we never intend publicly to own. But the true Cause, why we shall forbear answering such *Piqueish* *Queries* (only begging pardon for one single, very witty, very waggish one, which we are afraid will croud in, in our next *Love-Paper*,) is because, we wou'd write more like *Philosophers*, and offend as few as possible; and therefore, if hereafter we find a necessity of answering any thing of controversy between particular *Seats* or *Factions*, we shall only produce the *Arguments* on both sides, and leave 'em fairly to shift for themselves.

For the *Gentlemen's* further advice, not to be too credulous, we acknowledge it's very necessary to those who have undertaken so difficult a *Province* — But we have in very many *Instances* already observ'd it, continuing in pure suspense till the *Fact* is more clearly attested, particularly that of the *Fetch-Lights* he mentions — but on the other side — we must think eternal *Scepticism*, or a continu'd and resolute *Doubling* after sufficient *Evidence*, is even a greater *Enemy* to *Philosophy* and true *Knowledge*, than *Credulity* it self; The latter of which may croud in some *Falshoods*, but the former will ne're suffer us to acknowledge any *Truth*. Now we think we have reasonable, creditable *Evidence* for a thing tho' ne're so strange, where *Fact* is attested, especially if even upon *Oath*, by many credible *Witnesses*, as in the *Story* of the enchanted *Ship*, sometime since publish'd to the *World*. However we own the *Advice* is kind, and perhaps not altogether needless, and shall endeavour for the future to observe it.

For the last *Branch* concerning *Mr. Hobbs* we are still of the same mind we ever were, that he has done *Philosophy* almost as much mischief as *Religion*; It's true he's *Dead*, but his works yet speak, tho' not at all to his *Praise*, and 'tis a just *Curse*, "That the *Name* of the *Wicked* shall rot; and we may here as lawfully call and prove him a *Fool*, as he does, (the first we mean, for the last he never can) by so many thousands of *Holy Martyrs* — and there are but too many of his *Gang* still living, with whom we declare, we'll neither give nor take *Quarter*; and hope as little *Wit* and *Reason* as we have we shall at least make shift to be hard enough for the *Atheist*, who has been a *Fool* upon *Record* for above these three thousand *Years*.

Now for the *Gentlemen's* Query — What is the Cause of that common Motion in Nature, call'd *Gravitation*, or the Descending of those Bodies we call heavy?

Ans. The *Querist* himself justly rejects the Cause that was assign'd by the old *Philoso-*

phers — "Because they have an innate *Quality* call'd weight, which determines their *Nature* downwards; for that, as he observes, is only *Idem per Idem*, or it does so because it does so. He as justly rejects the second *Reason* alledg'd for it, by the Followers of the *Garden*, namely, "that all *Atoms* move downwards in an *Infinite* space, whereas in such a space, there's no higher or lower, because 'tis *Infinite*, having no *Terms* to move towards or fromwards. Further. if he takes downwards to signify the *Line* from our *Head* to our *Feet*, he adds, 'twill be ask't why they move that way rather than the other, since their *Nature*, and *Figure* are indifferent, & ex indifferenti nihil sequitur, (we may add that, turn but the *Man* with his *Head* in a contrary posture, and at that rate downwards wou'd be upwards, and upwards, downwards, heavy wou'd be *Light*, and *Light* heavy, which confounds all again.) Nor, he goes on, are there any different *Degrees* of *Resistance* in the *Medium* to incline those *Atoms*, cou'd they at all move themselves to take one way rather than the other.

He next produces the opinion of *Mr. White*, *Sir Kenelm Digby's* Tutor, with *Sir Kenelm's* Improvements, and his own Thoughts upon 'em. *Mr. White's* Hypothesis was — "That the first natural Cause of all Motion is the Heat or Fire of the *Sun*, and goes about to demonstrate, that this must it self first have been put into motion by an *Incorporeal* agent. *Sir Kenelm* hence subsuming and improving the notion makes the *Sun-beams* reflecting upwards to resist those particles that are more Rare, which must necessarily cause those that are more dense to Descend whole fall determines the motion of all those others on which their *Impulse* *Lights* downwards. Against this the *Querist* himself Objects — That if this held, then on the tops of highest *Hills*, whether this *Reflection* either reaches not, or at least is not so strong, there wou'd either be no *Gravitation*, or not so great as is in the *Air* near the surface of the *Earth* below, which none e're observed — But in this we doubt the *Gentleman* is mistaken, for unless we are so, the *Gravitation* is not so great on high *Hills*, as nearer the *Center*, as appears by the *Barometer*. He adds, he has walkt under *Marble Quarries*, entring in at the bottom of a high-Hill, yet cou'd not discern there was less *Gravitation* there than i'th' open *Air*, nor that his *Legs* did bear his *Body* with more ease, than when he walk't on the *Tops* of the highest *Mountains*, and it seems incredible, that the denser *Atoms* shou'd fall upon those *Bodies*, which are under that *Mountainous* Bulk of *Stone* and *Earth* with the same Facility and force, as they do upon the *Top* of the *Hill*, where there's nothing but the free and liquid *Air* to hinder their descent. Lastly the *Reflection* of the *Sun* carrying up those rarer *Particles* is far more vigorous in *Summer* than *Winter*, and *Day* than *Night*; but there's no discernably lesser *Gravitation* in those latter *Seasons* than the former. — Which Arguments we think do absolutely invalidate that Hypothesis, to which we can add, another of our own. The *Sun* was not made till the third day of



of the Creation, but the *Light*, the *Expanse*, (and so the *Air*,) the *Earth*, the *Waters*, &c. were made on the first and second. Now where-ever is *Earth* and *Air*, to go no further, there must be *Gravitation* and *Levitation*, otherways the *Earth*, *Trees*, &c. would have all tumbled into the *Air*, and return'd to *Chaos*. We must therefore find some new *Hypothesis* to solve these difficulties—and we'll freely give him our own in return for his. We suppose, nay think we can prove, a *Center* of gravity in the *Earth*, that is, a *Point* to which all other *Bodies* tend, but the *Question* is *how*. We answer, the *Earth* is in the *Nature* of a great *Animal*, and has something equivalent to *breathing* out and *drawing* in the *Air*: Or, to speak with the new *Philosophers*, the one great *Magnet*, and has a *Magnetical* Quality in every part of it, and much stronger in the whole. Now in all *Electrical* and *Magnetical* *Bodies*, there must some *Particles* go out, and some be still returning in the *Current*, where-of such things are drawn along, as it lights on, whose *Pores* are proportion'd for those little *Bodies* which seize upon 'em. Now *Light* things make not equal resistance, or rather don't Tally so well with the returning hamated *Particles* of the *Earth*, as those that are heavy.—For Example, a *Feather*, as a *Stone*, or *Iron*, whence those heavy *Bodies* are sooner drag'd to the *Earth*, whereas the *Magnetical* particle can't take such fast and sure hold of those *Bodies* we call *Light*; besides the heavy crouding fastest under, thrust 'em by. If nothing else, yet so much *Air* getting under 'em as the *Pillar* of *Air* is altogether more solid, and stronger than the single weight of the *Straw* or *Feather*, especially if mov'd with a *Breath* of *Wind*, accordingly the lighter *Substance* must necessarily float on the *Surface* of the *Air*, even when smooth and undisturbed, tho' easier when there's more *Air* beneath, as *Wood* in the *Water*, nay when agitated with *Wind* it takes up heavy *Substances*, more of it's *Particles* being then crouded together, as in an *Air Gun*, which we know throws a *Bullet* several yards, as a swift current of *Water* will for a short time, sustain even *Stones* and *Iron*, and hurry 'em along with it.

Quest. 1. *Whether Men shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone, or any Torment after this Life?*

Ans. We receiv'd this among several other *Questions* sometime since, from the same hand. The rest will be answer'd either in the next twelve Numbers, or our promis'd *Appendix*, but this being of more concern, and having been hinted at, in our discourse against *Gods* ordaining or necessitating *Sin*, Vol. 2. N. — we think it most proper to reply to it in a single *Mercury*. Only we must here ask the *Querists* leave to give him our own *Thoughts*, before we produce his, and to let the *Antidote* go before the *Poison*. Accordingly we answer in the *Affirmative*, which must be true, if *God* himself is. "That *Wicked Men* shall suffer *Torment* after this *Life*, that this *Torment* is express'd in the *Scriptures* by that of *Fire* and *Brimstone*. Nay, that the *Scriptures* unanswerably affirm those *Torments* shall

be *Eternal*, and that therefore they must be so if the *Scriptures* themselves are true.

Our Arguments for it shall be taken from *Scripture*, and from *Reason* — Those from *Reason* are as follow — 1. *Sin* deserves it. 2. *Man* chuses it. 3. There's a *Necessity* for it. 4. *Providence* requires it. 5. All *Nations* acknowledge it. Those from *Scripture* will come in, in their proper Places.

1. *Sin* deserves it, and that in its own *Nature*. This all *Protestants* hold of every *Sin*, who allow none to be in themselves *Venial*, and unless this be prov'd, we in vain attempt to save *Gods Justice*; nor is any way so effectual to evince it, as by the considering *Sin* as objectively infinite — against an *Infinite God*, or why else shou'd it deserve infinite *Punishment*? This is confirm'd — because *Man's Option* or *Choice* of this infinite *Punishment*, the known unavoidable consequence of *Sin*, tho' it might be sufficient to render *Man* *inexcusable*, does not, we think, clear the *Justice* of *God* in inflicting it, unless the *Sin* it self really deserv'd it, any more than the *Resolution* or *Will* of sinning infinitely, for tho' supposing *Sin* in it self deserves infinite *Punishment*, both the *Option* of *Man*, and *Contumacy* of the *Will* are strong Arguments both to Silence *Man*, and to vindicate the *Justice* of *God*; yet it seems not Consonant unto it, to inflict *Punishment* actually infinite for *Sin* that is not actual, or if so, for no other *Reason* than because it deserves it. Besides *Men* are punish'd after this *Life*, for *Sins* they have committed, rather than for those they would, at least those they might have committed — or if those they would, such as they immediately will'd, not such as are will'd at a distance in causes far remote, they having actual *Sins* more than enough to answer for. The *Objection* here urg'd is, "That this makes all *Sins* equal. In answer, they may be all said to be equal, as to that infinite *Object* against whom they are ultimately committed, and so are punished with infinite *Pains*, which are equal in their *Duration* — But they are unequal as to *Degree*, one *Sin* admitting more or less aggravations than another, or being in its own *Nature* more hainous; and accordingly there are unequal *Degrees* of *Pain* appointed for 'em — as our Saviour himself tells us, who says, *Mat. 10. 15. It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for Chorazin and Bethsaida in the Day of Judgment.*

It's again urg'd — *Infinite, Eternal Punishments* are unproportionate to *Finite Temporary Acts*. It's answer'd, as before, the *Object* inhances the guilt of the *Act*. It's a higher *Crime* to attempt a *Princes Murder* than another, and in our own *Laws* the *Punishment* lasts longer than the *Crime*, which may be committed in a *Moment*.

2. After this, *Option* comes in. *Man* chuses it. If *Sin* deserves *Infinite Punishment*, and yet *God* has found a way for *Man* to escape it, and he yet chuses *Sin*, when he knows what's the unavoidable consequence thereof, then *Gods Equity* is sufficiently vindicated in the inflicting it, nay *Man* may more properly be said to inflict it upon himself than *God*. His destruction is of himself, and he as much Damns himself



self when he leaps into Hell, as drowns himself when he leaps into the Water.

3. There's a Necessity for it — by which we mean *Eternal Punishments* are the necessary consequences of Sin — Necessary both from the Nature of the Soul and the Nature of Sin. From the Nature of the Soul — 'tis immortal, and must exist after Death: It can't in Joy, because habited to Vice and Hatred of God — It must then in Misery. Pain of Loss, is it self a real Misery, (as loss of pain a real happiness;) It causes Despair, and that alone is a great part of Hell. From the Nature of Sin, the longer 'tis continu'd in, the more it hardens, and will still do so, as habits still grow stronger, unless checkt by some contrary Principle or Habit. This, in this World Gods Grace performs, in those who don't too long wilfully resist it; There it will not, for the state of Probation is over, (unless we allow a Purgatory) and the miserable Damned Souls are under the Government of his Wrath, and not his Mercy: They have no Grace, no Mediator, therefore they must actually Sin eternally, and could they cease sinning, cou'd yet have no attonement for those Sins they formerly committed; and this is much more than a Will or Resolution of Sinning, and for this their Pains must be actually eternal.

4. Providence requires it. This is plain as far as Punishment after Death. For how else can God be a just Judge? how does he equally dispense Punishments and Rewards, both which are required from the Governour of the World? This is not always, nay not often done in this World, at least not clearly and evidently. A guilty Conscience does not do it, for generally the more Wicked a Man is, the more 'tis cauteriz'd and harden'd — at which rate the more a man deserv'd Hell, the less of it he'd suffer; where then is he punish'd? if not here it must be hereafter, and if hereafter to Eternity for the Reasons before mention'd, and as will appear more plainly when we come to consider the general Objections. However we shall add something on this Head. It must be either to Eternity, or else for a short, or a long time, and then to Heaven or Earth, or Annihilation. But none of the latter, therefore the former. Not for a short time, because it equals not their Sin, which might then have as well been punish'd, in this Life — besides, all grant the Expressions in Scripture must denote a long-time, if not Eternity — *Diuturnitas*, if not *Aeternitas*. Nor for a long-time only, suppose Millions of Years, and then to cease, because the Scripture won't admit it, as will anon appear; and because this wou'd be unproportion'd to Finite, Temporary, Transient Acts of Sin, as well as what's Eternal and Infinite. Not to remove thence to Heaven, where no unclean thing can enter, for the former Reasons. Not to Earth, because the World's destroy'd, or at least not fit for them: Not to nothing, because the Substance of the Soul's indissoluble — nor can any Accident destroy Substance, tho' it may alter it; nor can we suppose it by any positive Act of God, who is the Fountain of Being — there's then only remaining a Suspension of his Influence to make this Annihilation so much as possible; but how little Reason there is to expect so

much as this, nay how much certainty there is from the infallible Testimony of Heaven that the damned shall never obtain this last sad remedy, we shall clear when we come to produce the Arguments from Scripture which confirm our Opinion.

5. All Nations acknowledge it. We don't say, all Men in all Nations, nor all Sects of Men. We need not stretch it to all Men, tho' the Argument from Conscience is not easily answer'd; nor to all Sects of Men, some of which have at least pretended to deny or doubt of it. We affirm it, therefore, of the whole Bulk of the civiliz'd World, nay we may take in even most of the Barbarians, tho' it has been long since observ'd, the better men have been, either in Communities or single Instances, the more firmly they have still believ'd it. 'Tis further observable, that hardly ever any were known who granted Rewards after this Life, but acknowledge Punishments also, one being as equal as t'other, nay one being hardly equal without the other: And those Punishments Eternal, which they express'd by the Torments of *Tantalus*, *Titius*, the *Belides*, &c. And if 'tis said these were Fables, they had however some Moral in them, and if any at all, it must relate to this Eternity. But we han't time nor room here to prosecute this Argument, drawn from consent of Nations, to particular Instances, which has been largely and sufficiently done by *Numenius*, and many other more Modern Writers — who make it unanswerably appear, that this Principle has obtain'd in Nations at the greatest distance, who were ne're known to have had Communication with each other, Barbarous as well as Civil, without Laws as well as with 'em, nay before any Laws or Law-givers, besides the Law of Nature and God, who writ it on the Hearts of all Men too deeply to be ever totally effac'd again — which takes off most of the Objections against it, as they'll all fall to the Ground, if we fairly consider that cou'd any Instances be produced to the contrary out of any Authentick History, as we hardly believe there can, they might yet be as easily accounted; for as the profess'd Atheism of some single Persons in our own Nation, notwithstanding which we surely may with sufficient Propriety of speech affirm, that the English believe a God, since there are and will be Monsters in Morality as well as in Nature, tho' the latter less deform'd of the two, and tho' the one can no more invalidate universal Authority, than the other Disgrace or Denominate all Humanity, and thus much for the Arguments from Reason, for the Eternity of Punishments.

The second Head of Arguments arises from Scripture, whence this Truth is yet much more clear than from our own short-sighted Reason. For the Old Testament. Whether this be plainly there described or no, it's no valid Exception, nor so much as any considerable prejudice against it, since it's unanswerably clear in the New, Life and Immortality both of Good and Bad, being brought to Light in the Gospel, which were before more clouded under Types and Figures, and Promises of Temporal Felicity. However we'll not grant the Sadducee so much as this is, who is like to fight for every Inch of ground before he shall have it; nor will we in-

sist



first only on a *Parallel Argument*, that if under *Canaan* was Promis'd *Heaven*, as the *Apostle* tells us, and few deny, nay our *Church* (*Artic. 7.*) as good as *Anathematizes* those who do it; then on the contrary, under *temporal Destruction* and *Punishment*, coming short of that *Land*, falling in the *Wilderness*, &c. was also included *Hell* and *Eternal Destruction* and *Misery* — and thus the same *Apostle* seems to argue — “Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmur’d, and were destroy’d of the Destroyer — But besides this, we can produce positive Texts for future Retribution both of the *Just* and the *Unjust*. Thus, to instance in a few, *Isa. 32. 9, 10, 11, &c.* “The Earth mourneth and languisheth — Now will I rise, saith the Lord — The People shall be as the burning of Lime, as Thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the Fire — The Sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surpriz’d the Hypocrites — Who amongst us shall dwell with devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting Burnings? Nor can any escape the force of these Expressions, especially the last, by pretending the Answer in the next Verse, mentions the *Just Man* — and therefore he, not the *Wicked*, is here intended. — This we say won’t hold, for these Reasons — Because none can be just before God, or able to contend with him. Because this is only an *Interrogation* without an Answer, common enough with the *Hebrews* and all other Nations, being equivalent to a strong Negation — Who can dwell? that is none can dwell, because these pains are intolerable. Because the Prophet had been speaking of the *Wicked* just before, and because he clearly and distinctly discourses of the *Righteous* in the following Verses, and of their deliverance in the day of Vengeance and Perdition of the ungodly.

A second from the Old Testament is that in *Dan. 12. 2.* Many of them (or the Multitude of them, The many, as we our selves say) that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake, some to Everlasting Life, and some to shame and Everlasting Contempt. That this relates to the last Judgment appears from the Words themselves, as plain and evident as the Nature of the thing will bear, and from the Context which mentions the *Righteous* being written in the Book — of Life. Their shining as the Sun in the Firmament, nay as the Stars for ever and ever. And lastly by the Judgment of the Jewish Church, who as Learned Men tell us, did from this place, chiefly deduce their Faith of the Resurrection. And that they did believe it, before our Saviour came both of the *Just* and *Unjust*, we find in those writings of their *Wisemen*, which we call *Apocrypha*, whence tho’ we own ’em not of *Divine Authority*, we may prove this matter of Fact, as well as from any other History, *Eccl. 7. 17.* “The Vengeance of the Ungodly is Fire and Worms — Which seems plainly the same Description of Hell — which our Saviour gives — “Where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. Again *Eccl. 21. 9, 10.* “The End of the Wicked is a Flame of Fire to destroy them. The way of Sinners is made plain with Stones, but the End thereof is the

Pit of Hell — answerable to that of our Saviour — Broad is the way that leadeth to Destruction, 2 *Esd. 9. &c.* “They that cast away my Ways shall dwell in Torments. — “They that loathed my Law, and when yet Place of Repentance was open understood not, but despised it, the same must know it after Death by Pain. *Wisd. 3. 18, 19.* “If they dye quickly they have no hope with Comfort in the day of Death — for horrible is the End of the Unrighteous, 2 *Mac. 6. 26.* Says old Eleazar, “For tho’ for the present time I shou’d be deliver’d from the Punishment of Men, yet shou’d I not escape the Hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor Dead; and in the next Chap. the last of the seven Brethren tells Antiochus, “Our Brethren, who now have suffered a short pain, are dead under Gods Covenant of Everlasting Life, but thou thro’ the Judgment of God shalt receive Just Punishment, for thy Pride. Now it’s plain he cou’d not have just Punishment in this World, because not equal to his Deserts, and the torments he made ’em suffer; it must then be in another, and in something opposed to that Everlasting Life they expected.

But to come to a more sure word of Prophecy than this, and more clear than the Old Testament (if any thing can be clearer than that in *Daniel*) we shall begin with the Testimony of St. John in the New, *St. Mat. 3. 10, 12.* where we find threaten’d Fire, and unquenchable Fire, and if unquenchable it must last for ever. And under the name of Fire, are the Punishments of Wicked men after this Life express’d in at least Twenty several places of the New Testament, and in three it’s call’d Hell-fire, and at least Ten times with the addition of Unquenchable, Everlasting, Eternal, or something equivalent. The first place where we find Hell Fire mention’d is, *Mat. 5. 22.* “Whosoever shall say, Thou Fool shall be in danger of Hell-fire — or rather shall deserve Hell-fire — (which confirms our first Argument from Reason.) ’Tis, *ἄνεστις ἐστὶς ἐν τῇ γέεννῃ τῆς πυρρῆς.* Our way of burning alive was not then in use among the Jews, as Learned Critics tell us, but our Saviour here, ’tis granted, alludes to the terrible burnings in the Valley of Hinnom, whence the Name *Gehenna* is deriv’d, and by which the Jews express’d the Place of Torment after this Life, that being the most dreadful Name, they cou’d put upon it, all Nations using the same way, as the Romans in their *Avernus*, the *Gracians* in their *Styx*, (which tho’ generally esteem’d a Well in *Arcadia*, *Servius* tells us, is a bottomless Lake between *Egypt* and *Aethiopia*) and *Tartarus*, commonly used by both; nay even the Holy Spirit himself uses a Word of the same Notation to express the Punishment of the fallen Angels, 2 *Pet. 2. 4.* *τῶν ἀνέμων.* And it’s remarkable, that almost all Nations have express’d the Torments of Hell much in the same manner; by Fire and Brimstone, and Darkness, and a Bottomless Pit, and, as has been said before, tho’ some of these are Metaphorical, yet that’s small Comfort, since the Figure must needs come short of the Life. And in this Sense, for Place or State of Eternal and interminable Torments



Torments after this Life, the Jews used the Word *Gebenna*, (as *Paradise*, &c. for the Place of the Happy. Thus we find it in the *Jerusalem Targum*, on the third of *Genesis Chaldean Paraphrase*, *Iſa.* 26. 15. and several other Books and Places: And in this it seems our Saviour follow'd 'em, tho' revealing much more clearly what they before, but darkly and doubtfully believ'd concerning them; and it's plain, he takes this Hell and the Fire of Hell for *Eternal Torments*, by comparing this with several other places. The first is in the same *St. Mat.* 5. 29, 30. — "To have thy whole Body cast into Hell, the same Expression in the Greek with that in the 22. *ἄνδρας* being there to be added, as that great Critick *Petitus* observes. Now this Hell, is explain'd in another place, *Mat.* 18. 8. By *Everlasting Fire*, "Having two Hands or two Feet, to be cast into *Everlasting Fire*. The Proof is then clear — if by being cast into Hell, and into the Fire of Hell, our Saviour means *Everlasting Fire*, then 'tis to be so taken in this place, and wherever else he mentions Hell, — But that it is so, he himself tells us. Now that this is more than the Death of the Body, and that by *Destruction* is not meant *Annihilation*, will be evinc'd from *St. Mat.* 10. 28. compar'd with *St. Luk.* 12. 5. In *St. Matthew*, "Fear not them which Kill the Body, but are not able to Kill the Soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell. In *St. Luke*, "Fear him which after he hath kill'd hath Power to cast into Hell. Were it only burning the Body, as those in the Valley of *Hinnom*, Men cou'd do as much, but 'tis something that Men can't do, 'tis after they are kill'd, it relates to the Soul, nay to both Soul and Body, which he hath Power to cast into Hell, which therefore must be more than a *Metaphor*; or else Gods Power wou'd be no more than Mans — Nor is this destroying in Hell, or casting into Hell, the same with *Annihilation* — Because the Word *ἀπώλεια* — *Destruction*, or *Destroying*, is used of the good, whom none but open *Atheists* will pretend are annihilated. Thus *Mat.* 10. 39. Twice together — "He that will save his Life shall lose it, &c. *ἀπολέσῃ*. Nay of our Saviour himself, *Mat.* 27. 20. The *Pharisees* moved the Jews, "That they shou'd ask *Barabbas*, and destroy Jesus — *ἀπολέσωσιν*. Nor does this only denote Gods Power, but his Will, and actual Intentions towards wicked Men, as we learn from the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, the whole Scope of which, if 'tis any thing at all, is to shew Gods Equity in future Retribution. "Now he is Comforted, "and thou art Tormented. So in that Parable, *St. Mat.* 13. 30. "Gather ye together the Tares, "and bind them in bundles to burn them. Nor is't enough to say these is all Parable, because our Saviour explains it privately to his Disciples, v. 40. and 42. "As therefore the Tares are gather'd together and burnt in the Fire, so shall it be in the End of the World. The Son of Man shall send his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things which offend, and them which do Iniquity, "and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire,

— and v. 49. To the same purpose, and almost in the same Words — And thus by a double Exposition here given us by our Saviour himself, we are taught how to explain other Parables of the same Nature — Particularly that illustrious Description of the General Judgment, *St. Mat.* 25. 41. — If indeed, that be not rather a Propheſie than a Parable, there being nothing more of mystery in't than the easie Metaphor of Sheep and Goats for Good and Bad Men. And of the Wicked, 'tis that our Saviour says v. 41. "Depart from me ye cursed into *Everlasting Fire*, We have no Reason to doubt its being a real Fire, since he so often calls it so who sav'd us from it — but that it won't be the same with our Culinary Fire may easily be granted, tho' they'll get nothing by't, for 'tis infinitely more exquisite, 'tis such as will Torment even a Spirit — 'tis "Prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels. Yet as it to obviate all future Objections, the Word is chang'd for one larger and fuller, v. 46 where 'tis "into *Everlasting Punishment* — These shall go away — The Sentence must be executed as well as pronounc'd on those miserable Souls, and they must waste unnumbered Years in a fruitless Expiation, unless Truth it self can deceive, or *Everlasting* be at an End. And those are driven to a miserable shift who to avoid the unanswerable force of these, and such like Expressions, are forc'd to explain *Infinite* by what's Finite, *Everlasting* by not *Everlasting*, and *Eternal*, by what will never exist, or will at last have an End. — We intended to have proceeded with other Texts as full as plain as these already examin'd, and to have explain'd the meaning and use of these Words, *αἰῶνες* — *αἰῶνες*, *αἰώνιον*, *αἰώνιος*, *αἰώνιος*, &c. For ever, for ever, and ever, *Everlasting*, *Eternal*, &c. as well as to have consider'd the Objections our Querist brings against this Doctrine, and what else we have promis'd in the Body of this Discourse — But tho' we have laid our thoughts as close as possible, yet we han't room in this narrow Paper, and therefore think to remit the remaining matter, to another Mercury.

Quest. 2. Whether it be probable that this Terraqueous Globe, has chang'd the Scituation of it's Poles, because of the appearing Confusion and Disorder of the Places and Motions of the Celestial Bodies?

Ans. We suppose the Gentleman aims chiefly at the change of the Signs places in the Zodiack, which if our modern Astronomers are not mistaken, have of late Years trod upon each others heels, or shoulder'd each other out of their old Stations: But we must confess we rather suspect the Ancients than believe any such alteration. Their Instruments were not as good as ours, nor cou'd their Observations be so exact, as we are sure their Knowledge in those matters, came very short of our Modern Astronomers. We are therefore apt to believe, till we can be better satisfied in the exactness of the old Astronomers just as much of the Signs changing Places as of the Paradisiacal Form of the Earth, and the Alteration of it, so much talk't of by a late ingenious Writer.